New Global Alliance Promises to Advance Wild Animal Care Across South Africa

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[JOHANNESBURG / LONDON, 18th February 2026] International animal welfare organisation Wild Welfare has joined forces with the South African Animal Keepers Association (SAAKA) to bring world-class support and expertise to wildlife caregivers throughout the region. An inaugural Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has officially been signed to drive up standards of wild animal care and education at progressive zoos, aquariums, and sanctuaries across South Africa.

By increasing access to high quality educational materials and professional development, the two organisations aim to up-skill frontline animal care professionals and managers in key areas of animal care and welfare. By applying such learning, keepers have the opportunity to significantly help reduce captive-related stress, or better provide for an animal's need to promote their naturalistic behaviors for example. Ultimately, these improvements move the needle from mere survival to truly good welfare, allowing animals to thrive in a safe, stimulating environment.

SAAKA was established in 2024 to create a formal network for animal care professionals in South Africa, providing a voice for those who understand the intricate needs of the animals in their care. This partnership with Wild Welfare, a global leader in animal welfare training, will bring important expertise and resources directly to the South African animal keeper community.

“Authentic long-term relationships lie at the foundation of our work,” said Dave Morgan, Field Director for Wild Welfare. “This MoU is grounded in long-term, authentic relationships and a practical commitment to supporting staff on the ground, so that animals under human care are managed to thrive rather than simply persist.”

The formalised partnership hopes to increase the availability of advanced welfare training and learning opportunities for animal caregivers within SAKKA’s membership while establishing a platform for sharing resources, husbandry techniques, and progressive welfare research.

Robynn Ingle-Moller, Vice-President of SAAKA, highlighted the significance of the union, stating, “Keepers are the first responders in animal welfare. By banding together and partnering with an organisation like Wild Welfare, we are ensuring that the future of animal care in South Africa is grounded in compassion, science, and professional excellence.”

The MoU marks the beginning of a five-year journey dedicated to raising the bar for captive animal welfare and ensuring a brighter future for the thousands of wild animals housed across South Africa's managed facilities.

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